

St. John Fisher Church Funeral Guidelines



We are sorry for your loss. In the midst of your grief, please allow us to minister to you, your family, your friends and your colleagues. We understand that people in grief often want to do one last act for their loved one; the most you can do to honor your loved one is to pray for them as we celebrate the Church's liturgy together. Though we certainly remember your loved one at Mass, it is Christ whom we worship each time we come to church to pray and worship. Our worship of Christ is central in the three times we gather, as outlined in the *Order of Christian Funerals*.

Vigil for the Deceased

- These prayers normally take place at the funeral home, usually the night before the Funeral Mass. A member of our Bereavement Committee, a priest, or deacon leads these brief prayers.
- The Vigil is the ordinary place where eulogies, and mourners speaking about the life of the loved one who has died, are given.
- Specific prayers may also take place at St. John Fisher, before the funeral Mass begins, if the visitation takes place at church.
- Praying the rosary and other private devotions is appropriate at the funeral home, or in St. John Fisher gathering area, but does not replace the Vigil prayers from the *Order of Christian Funerals*.

Funeral Mass (or Funeral Liturgy outside Mass), generally 10:00 a.m.

- Because we want to minister to you in your grief, St. John Fisher will ordinarily provide lectors who will read the Scripture readings and Universal Prayer, as well as Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion. If other lectors are utilized, they must be lectors in the parish where they attend Mass. If Extraordinary Ministers who are not members of St. John Fisher are utilized, they must be Commissioned Ministers in the parish where they attend Mass.
- Some of the music is predetermined by the Music Minister, the liturgical season and the appropriateness of the music for the Rite. Only *liturgical music is sung for the funeral Mass & Prelude Music*. Final approval of

musical selections are made by the Pastor or Parochial Vicar. St. John Fisher is responsible for arranging the presence of liturgical musicians.

- If a priest other than the pastor or parochial vicar is the presider at the funeral, please have him contact the pastor of Saint John Fisher to discuss these guidelines. (513.688.3144) In these situations it is the family's responsibility to compensate the presider, as agreed upon with the family and the presider.
- In extenuating circumstances (no visitation or Vigil was held) the Words of Remembrance (eulogy) might precede the Mass in church, but the usual place is at the Vigil. If a reception is held following burial, this is another opportunity to remember your loved one.
- A member(s) of the Bereavement Committee will meet with family members of the deceased prior to the funeral to discuss reading selections from the Scriptures. These readings are ordinarily taken from the *Order of Christian Funerals*, and may focus on the life of the deceased, in light of the life, death and resurrection of Christ. The liturgical season of the church may give direction to the readings. Musical suggestions may also be made during the preparation meeting with the Bereavement Committee member and the family.
- So that the homily may be appropriate for the life of the person, family members are asked to answer the questions on the attached sheet and e-mail them to the pastor at del.staigers@sjfchurch.org, or the parochial vicar at davidd@sjfchurch.org. You may also drop them off at the parish office prior to the funeral.



Rite of Committal

- Committal of the Body or Cremated Remains usually takes place immediately following the Funeral Mass.
- This service may be led by a priest, deacon or lay person.
- There may be Words of Remembrance given at this time.
- Military acknowledgments are made at this time.
- It is important to remember that the Procession to the cemetery is *part* of the liturgy, symbolic of our journey to the New and Eternal Jerusalem.



A Word about Cremation

Cremation is an option that is permitted in the Church today. Ideally, the body is present for the Mass of Christian Burial, with cremation following the Mass. The cremated remains may also be present for the Mass of Christian Burial, with burial or inurnment taking place following the Mass. In either event, the cremated remains must be reverently buried or placed in a niche, accompanied by usual prayers of the Rite of Committal.

Father of Mercies and God of all consolation,
You pursue us with untiring love
and dispel the shadow of death
with the bright dawn of life.

Comfort your family in their loss and sorrow.
Be our refuge and our strength, O
Lord, and lift us from the depths of
grief into the peace and light of
your presence.

Your Son, our Lord Jesus
Christ, by dying has destroyed
our death,
and by rising, restored our life.
Enable us therefore to press on
toward him, so that, after our earthly
course is run, he may reunite us with
those we love,
when every tear will be wiped away.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.